

Message Text

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47

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-14 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /140 W
----- 077906

R 020650Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0164

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION NATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
CINCLANT
USCINCEUR
DIA

UNCLAS LISBON 3273

EMBASSY FOR CAPE TOWN

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PO
SUBJ: BRIG. OTELO CARVALHO TELLS PRESS OF ORIGINS
OF APRIL 25 COUP

SUMMARY: THERE FOLLOWS AN ACCOUNT BY "BRAINS" BEHIND
APRIL 25 MILITARY OPERATIONS OF HOW COUP ORIGINATED
AND WAS CARRIED OUT. END SUMMARY.

1. DIARIO POPULAR HAS JUST CONCLUDED A THREE-PART INTERVIEW
WITH BRIG. OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO, DEPUTY CHIEF OF
COPCON, MILITARY GOVERNOR OF LISBON, AND ALLEGED "BRAINS"
BEHIND APRIL 25 COUP. IN INTERVIEW CARVALHO EXPLAINED
ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF MOVIMENTO DA FORCAS ARMADAS (MFA).
HIGHLIGHTSFOLLOW (FULL TEXTS POUCHED EUR/IB).

2. THROUGHOUT 1973 LOWER RANKS IN ARMED FORCES WERE
GROWING INCREASINGLY DISSATISFIED WITH OVERSEAS WARS, WHOSE
END WAS NOT IN SIGHT AS FAR AS THEY CONCERNED. STRAW THAT BROKE
CAMELS BACK AND FORGED UNITY OF MAJORS AND
CAPTAINSIN ARMY WAS DECREE LAW 353/73 OF JULY 13, 1973.
THIS LAW, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ALLOWED RESERVE OFFICERS
TO ENTER REGULAR SERVICE AFTER TAKING SHORT COURSE AT
MILITARY ACADEMY. IN FACE OF RESULTANT OPPOSITION
BY MAJORS AND CAPTAINS, DEFENSE MINISTER GEN. SA VIANA
REBELO AGREED TO REVISE LAW 353. DECREE LAW 409/73
OF AUGUST 21, 1973 SATISFIED MAJORS DEMANDS BUT NOT THOSE
OF CAPTAINS, WHO PROCEEDED TO FORM THE CAPTAINS'
MOVEMENT (INITIALLY ONLY TO STRUGGLE FOR PROFESSIONAL
BENEFITS FOR THEMSELVES. CARVALHO
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SAYS THIS MILITARY AND NON-POLITICAL PHASE LASTED UNTIL
BEGINNING DECEMBER 1973.) MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT
RESPONSE TO CAPTAINS DEMAND WAS ATTEMPT IN EFFECT TO
"BUY THEM OFF" WITH OFFERS OF HIGHER SALARIES. ACCORDING
TO CARVALHO, HOWEVER, HIGHER SALARIES NEVER WERE A
MOVEMENT DEMAND.

3. CAPTAINS' MOVEMENT FIRST BEGAN IN GUINEA WITH AN

"ATTITUDE OF INDISCIPLINE TO MILITARY REGULATIONS." ON AUGUST 28 A GROUP OF CAPTAINS HELD A MEETING IN BISSAU TO COMPLAIN ABOUT ABOVE-MENTIONED DECREES. THEY DRAFTED A LETTER (WITH 55 SIGNATURES) WHICH THEY SENT ON SEPTEMBER 5 TO PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER, MIN. DEFENSE, UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AMY AND NATIONAL EDUCATION MINISTER. CARVALHO SAYS THAT REACTION WAS IMMEDIATE AND NEGATIVE. DEFENSE MINISTER QUICKLY ORDERED INVESTIGATION OF THOSE WHO SIGNED LETTER. ON SEPTEMBER 9 ANOTHER (AND PRESUMABLY UNRELATED) MEETING OF 136 CAPTAINS TOOK PLACE IN EVORA, AND MOVEMENT BORN IN METROPOLE. AS IN GUINEA, THIS GROUP SENT LETTER OF COMPLAINTS TO SAME FIVE OFFICIALS LISTED ABOVE. AS RESULT OF COMPLAINTS BO BOTH GROUPS DEFENSE MINISTER AND ARMY UNDER SECRETARY DISMISSED IN OCTOBER.

4. ON SEPTEMBER 16, 1973, CARVALHO, WHO HAS JUST BEEN PROMOTED TO MAJOR (SEPTEMBER 1), WAS TRANSFERRED TO ARTILLERY SCHOOL IN METROPOLE (VENDAS NOVAS), WHERE, HOWEVER, HE REMAINED ONLY 15 DAYS BEFORE BEING GIVEN JOB AS ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF TACTICS AT MILITARY ACADEMY (NOVEMBER 16) WHILE AT ACADEMY CARVALHO AND OTHERS BEGAN PLANS FOR FUTURE REVOLUTION. LEADERSHIP CAPTAINS MOVEMENT ASSUMED BY CARVALHO, CAPT. VASCO LOURENCO (NOW ON COUNCIL STATE) AND MAJOR VITOR AVLES (ALSO ON COUNCIL STATE).

5. ABORTIVE CALDAS EPISODE, ACCORDING TO CARVALHO, WAS RESULT OF TOTAL LACK OF PLANNING AND A CASE OF "JUMPING THE GUN" BY CALDAS UNIT. ALTHOUGH NOT INTENDED AS SUCH, UPRISING CONSTITUTED "AN EXTRAORDINARY TRIAL BALOON". ONE BENEFIT WAS THAT AS RESULT OF FAILURE OF CALDAS GOVERNMENT BECAME OVERCONFIDENT. AFTER CALDAS FIASCO
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GOVERNMENT BEGAN TO ATTEMPT TO DISMATEL MOVEMENT COMPLETELY SO AS PREVENT FUTURE ANTI-GOVERNMENT PLOTS. VARIOUS PERSONS WERE TRANSFERRED AND DGS (SECRET POLICE) BEGAN INFILTRATE MOVEMENT. CARVALHO SAYS THAT MOVEMENT MET AFTER CALDAS FAILED AND CONCLUDED GOVERNMENT MUST BE BROUGHT DOWN BY FORCE QUICKLY. DATE SET WAS WEEK OF APRIL 22 TO 29. CARVALHO ALLEGES HE TRAVELED THOUSANDS OF KILOMETERS IN HIS PERSONAL CAR TO CONTACT LEADING PLOTTERS IN FOLLOWING WEEKS. PLANS WENT WELL, AND ON APRIL 22 WORD SENT OUT THAT COUP WOULD OCCUR THAT WEEK. EVENING APRIL 23 MAJOR PLOTTERS MET AT 2000 HOURS AND SET 25TH AS "D-DAY". ON 24TH APPOINTED CODE MESSAGE (PLAYING OF SONG "E DEPOIS DO ADEUS") WENT OUT AT 2255 OVER RADIO RENASCENCA, MOST POWERFUL LOCAL RADIO STATION, AND COUP WAS UNDERWAY.

6. AFTER SONG SIGNALLING COMMENCEMENT OF COUP PLAYED OVER RADIO RENASCENCA THERE WAS PERIOD OF HESITATION IN CALVARY REGIMENT3 IN ESTREMOZ. CARVALHO ALLEGES SOMEONE THERE SPREAD STORY THAT HE WAS DOUBLE AGENT FOR GOVERNMENT AND WAS TRICKING THEM INTO EXPOSING THEMSELVES SO THAT THEY COULD BE ARRESTED. ARRIVAL OF ONE OF HIS MEN AND ANNOUNCEMENTS OVER RADIO CLUB PORTUGUESE OF BEGINNING OF COUP OVERCAME THEIR DOUBTS, AND ESTREMOZ UNIT JOINED REVOLT. HEADQUARTERS FOR REBELS ESTABLISHED 2000 HOURS APRIL 24 AT PONTINHA.

7. EXPECTATION WAS THAT COUP WOULD TAKE ONLY 12 HOURS, BUT FAILURE BY REBELS WITHIN PRO-GOVERNMENT UNITS TO CAPTURE UNIT COMMANDERS THRE TIMETABLE OFF. MOVEMENT ABOVE ALL SOUGHT TO AVOID BLOODSHED. THIS SLOWED DOWN OPERATIONS, WHICH DID NOT TERMINATE UNTIL SURRENDER OF DGS IN MORNING APRIL 26.

8. SEPTEL FOLLOWS WITH CARVALHO'S ACCOUNT OF ROLE OF GENERALS SPINOLA AND COSTA GOMES IN PLANNING FOR COUP AND DRAFTING OF MOVEMENT'S PROGRAM.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARAMILITARY FORCES, GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 AUG 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LISBON03273
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740211-0023
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740879/aaaacqak.tel
Line Count: 192
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 FEB 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 FEB 2002 by reddocgw>; APPROVED <14 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BRIG. OTELO CARVALHO TELLS PRESS OF ORIGINS OF APRIL 25 COUP
TAGS: PINS, PO, (CARVALHO, OTELO DE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005